



BOARD OF OPTOMETRY  
2420 DEL PASO ROAD, SUITE 255  
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95834  
TEL: (916) 575-7170  
[www.optometry.ca.gov](http://www.optometry.ca.gov)



FACT SHEET  
REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A LICENSE TO PRACTICE OPTOMETRY

To obtain a license to practice optometry in the state of California, you must:

- Submit a completed “APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE AS AN OPTOMETRIST”.

To download an application, visit the board’s website at [www.optometry.ca.gov](http://www.optometry.ca.gov). Click on the link entitled "Licensee/Applicant Information" located on the left side of the Board’s homepage. Then click on “Application for Licensure As An Optometrist”.

- Submit a non-refundable application fee of \$275.00
- Have graduated from an approved school of optometry. You must request that your school send directly to the Board, an official school transcript showing that you were awarded a degree in “Doctor of Optometry” and the year it was awarded.
- Pass the NBEO examination, parts I, II, & III. You must request that your official score report (OSR) be sent directly to the Board.

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATES: In order to sit for NBEO examinations, you must receive Board approval. To receive approval from the Board, you must submit a written request, and request that your official school transcript showing that you were awarded a degree in “Doctor of Optometry” be sent directly to the Board from your school of optometry.

- Pass the California Laws and Regulations Examination.

The Laws and Regulations are listed in the 2006 Edition of the California Laws and Regulations related to the Practice of Optometry. To review or download the laws and regulations, you may visit the Board’s website and click on the link entitled “Laws & Regulations”. Then click on the link entitled “2006 Law Book”. You may also wish to purchase the 2006 Law Book by contacting the publisher’s customer service department at 800-833-9844.

The official “Candidate Handbook and Study Guide” for the laws and regulations examination is now available and can be accessed by clicking on the link found on the Board’s web-site main page under “HIGHLIGHTS”.

- Have your fingerprints taken for a criminal background check.

CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS:

All applicants who wish to have their fingerprints taken in the State of California must use the “Request For Live Scan Service” *form*. The request *form* can be obtained by clicking on the following Board link:

[Request for Live Scan Service Form](#)

If you are unable to download this form, please contact the Board and request that this form be sent to you.

For information on live scan service locations and fees, go to the California Office of the Attorney Generals web site at [www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us), click on "Fingerprint Submissions", and then click on "List of Applicant Live Scan Sites". You will need to click on the county where you wish to have your live scan form processed.

A scanning fee may be collected when you get your fingerprints scanned. Since this fee varies widely among locations, you may want to review the cost before going to a live scan site. Be sure to check for any restrictions on method of payment, such as cash, money order only or if any appointment is required.

In addition to the scanning fee, a criminal history-reporting fee of \$51.00 will be charged at the time you submit for live scan service.

NON-CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS:

Applicants who cannot have their fingerprints taken in the State of California must use a paper fingerprint card and service. The card is obtained by submitting your request to the Board. You must take this card to any local, state or other law enforcement agency for taking your fingerprints.

A fingerprint-rolling fee may be collected when you get your fingerprints taken. Since this fee varies widely among locations, you may want to review the cost before going to a fingerprint site. Be sure to check for any restrictions on method of payment, such as cash, money order only or if any appointment is required.

In addition to the fingerprint-rolling fee you pay at the time your fingerprints are taken, a criminal Background-reporting fee of \$51.00 is to be submitted to the Board along with your fingerprint card. You may make this fee payable to the Board of Optometry.

PROCESSING TIME:

Please allow a minimum of two (2) weeks before making a status inquiry.

Applications for licensure are good for one year from the date of receipt at the Board's office.